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REAL SCOUT LIFE

A PLAY IN TWO ACTS

For THE BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA



"REAL SCOUT LIFE"

A PLAY IN TWO ACTS

By Susan B. Davis

DEDICATED

TO

VICTOR AND ARTHUR WERNER



WITH FULL DIRECTIONS FOR STAGING AND PLAYING
PRICE 25 CENTS

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SUSAN B. DAVIS

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DIRECTIONS AND SUGGESTIONS.

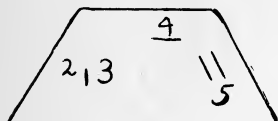
R. and L.—Right and left of actor as he faces the audience.

C.—Center of stage.

Local names, events and scenes should be substituted as far as possible for those used in this edition. All the dialog may be given by a few if so desired. The stories should be assigned to the boys best able to tell them well.

The march, dumb-bell and flag drills are given in detail in the back of the book.

DIAGRAMS

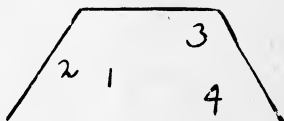


ACT I

1, 2, 3 -- Table and Chairs.

4 -- Punching Bag.

5 -- Bars.



ACT II, SCENE 1

1 -- Fire.

2 -- Table.

3 -- Tent.

4 -- Bench.

Costumes—Regulation Scout uniforms.

Properties—A punching bag, parallel bars, or some sort of apparatus for exercising, various appropriate articles and furnishings for "barracks," specimen case, etc., camp supplies and utensils, one tent, other articles ad libitum.

The action should all be given with snap and energy, and the dialog with enthusiasm and good nature.

CAST OF CHARACTERS.

JAMES or "BOOTS"—Patrol leader.

BUGS—Of a scientific turn of mind.

BILL—The smallest Scout who generally "seconds the motion."

RED—

SPIKE—

GEORGE—

ARTHUR—

TEN-PENNY—

JERRY—

FAT—

FRITZ—

SPECKS—

CHALMERS—

HENRY—

CURTIS—

JOHN—

SYNOPSIS OF SCENES.

ACT I.

Scene I—Barracks of Troop No. 1.

ACT II.

Scene I—In camp, afternoon and evening.

Scene II— The same, morning one week later.

Time for acting—One hour and thirty minutes.

REAL SCOUT LIFE

ACT I.

(THE BARRACKS—As the scene opens Red, Spike and George are at punching bag, Arthur, Ten-penny, Jerry, Fat and Fritz are exercising on the bars, Specks and Chalmers are reading. Numerous interesting articles are scattered around the room.)

GEARGE—Where's Boots, he promised to be here early to tell us what Lieu. Roberts decides about our expedition.

CHALMERS—I saw him and Bugs going toward the creek as I came over.

FRITZ—Probably out after more specimens. Did you ever see such a fellow for SPECIMENS as old Bugs is, anyway?

(Enter James or "Boots".)

SEVERAL—Hello, Boots, where's Bugs?

BOOTS—I left him making a cross section of a parasitized colony of colonial caterpillars, or something of the sort.

SPECKS—On, Boots, you would better take a few science lessons of Bugs yourself.

ARTHUR—Well, what did Lieu. Roberts say about the trip?

BOOTS—We're going if the weather settles down.

TEN-PENNY—It's going to be bright and sunny before noon, there was quite a fog this morning.

SPECKS—"Rain before seven, clear before eleven."

JERRY—The wind has switched around to the west, it will be clear and cool tonight and tomorrow will be O. K.

BOOTS—Say, if you weather prognosticators will desist for a few minutes we may be able to get something done.

FAT—We'll have to clear up this place before we can pack.

(All start to work. Much fun can be furnished by the manner in which the boys "clear up".)

(Enter Henry, Curtis, John, and Bill.)

BOOTS—Hello, fellows, get ahold here and help straighten things up a little.

(Henry, Curtis, John and Bill hinder about as much as they help by scattering the things which they have brought around the room.)

HENRY—Are we going on the trip?

SEVERAL—Sure.

CURTIS—Where is the camp to be?

BOOTS—Down in the timber near the spring on Si Simonson's place.

GEORGE—And we're going to stay a week, and it's not far from the lake and the swimming hole—

SPIKE—And we can fish and shoot and—

BOOTS—"Be prepared."

ALL—Zing-a-zing!

—Bom! Bom!

BILL—Oh, it will be great!

RED—The Scout's life is the life for boys, all right.

SPECKS—That makes me think. Have you fellows read that new symphony that was in the last "Courier?"

SEVERAL—No.

BOOTS—Read it, Specks.

SPECKS—*(Reads.)*

To live, as much as possible, out-of-doors,—under the broad expanse of heaven, near to Mother Earth.

To study the stars, the elements and all things in nature,—the birds of the air, the beasts of the fields, and the creatures that teem the waters.

To be glad to give aid to the injured, be it man or animal.

To regard all beings as brothers.

To be courteous, to be gentle, to be kind.

To be ready at all times to perform duty cheerfully, be it for the home, the school, the church, the state or the nation.

To believe that the best service ever comes in the lines of peace and not those of strife.

To cultivate the highest ideals of manhood and citizenship—THIS IS THE SCOUT'S SYMPHONY.

BOOTS—That's fine.

CHALMERS—We fellows ought to appreciate what it means to belong to an organization that stands for things of that kind.

RED—It will suit old Bugs.

BILL—That's a sure thing.

(By this time "things" have been "straightened up".)

GEORGE—Where IS BUGS anyway? If he were here we could run thru our new marching drill and have that off our hands for the day.

TEN-PENNY—Let's go thru it anyway, we can get along without Bugs.

CURTIS—He will probably show up before we finish.

BOOTS—Fall in!

(The line is formed and all is ready for the march when Bugs comes rushing in with his specimen case and a fine "specimen" of a butterfly which he tries to show them. Some of the boys take an interest in what he has and the line is completely broken up. One or two of the boys finally take the thing away from Bugs, and Boots once more gives the order "Fall-in".)

The Scout Military March is given.

BOOTS—Come on, let's get our commissary department organized and finish our plans for the trip.

GEORGE—All right Boots, go ahead.

BOOTS—Attention, Scouts! What shall be the order of the day?

ARTHUR—Mr. Chairman, I move that we proceed to an informal discussion of the plans of our expedition.

BILL—I second the motion.

(The motion is "put".)

FAT—I don't think that much discussion is necessary. There is just about one thing to be said, and that is have PLENTY OF PIE!

ALL IN CHORUS—PIE!

FAT—Well, have enough of other things too.

SPIKE—Fat, I should think that you would get poor carrying around all the pie that you eat.

SPECKS—You're as far gone over pie as Bugs is over bugs.

FAT—*(Putting his arms around Bugs' neck.)* They don't need to worry about us, do they, old Bugs?

With plenty of pie

The world we defy.

(Bugs and Fat go thru several sparring movements, finally rolling over on the floor where they sit thru the rest of the dialog.)

FRITZ—I think that if he will promise to get some REAL things to eat that Fat will be a good chairman of the Food Supplies and Cooking Utensils Committee, and I move that we make him chairman, and he can choose four other fellows to help.

BILL—I second the motion.

(The motion is carried.)

BOOTS—Well, that settles the most important committee, now for the chairman of the Grounds and General Sanitation Committee.

HENRY—Spike and Ten-penny have been with their father in the big hunting camps in Wisconsin, and they know all about laying out camps.

JOHN—I move that they have the camp in charge with six scouts to help.

BILL—I second the motion.

JERRY—Got a mortgage on the "seconding" proposition, Bill?

(The motion is carried.)

BOOTS—Now the Tents and General Camp Utensils

Committee.

GEORGE—I move that Boots be chairman of this committee and that all the rest of us who are not otherwise engaged help him.

BILL—Again I sec—

JERRY—Sit down, Bill. I second the motion.

(The motion is put by George and carried.)

BOOTS—I guess the committees are all right. Now you fellows do your THINKING first and your ACTING second, and let's have one of the best organized Scout Camps that ever existed. We'll have more fun if we do things right.

BILL—All right, "Father Boots."

(Boots makes a lunge after him but Bill slips away.)

BOOTS—*(Looking at the time.)* Just time enough left to practice one drill and then we must get busy. The Scout Anvil Chorus Dumb-bell Drill, boys.

The Scout Anvil Chorus Dumb-bell Drill is given.

Curtain.

ACT II—SCENE I.

(THE CAMP—Everybody at work. The "committees" are prominent. Some boys are pitching a tent L. corner, up stage; some are arranging general camp articles. Fat and his helpers are making the fire and getting supper. Dishes are all on one small table. Fire can be managed by placing regular camp-fire sticks and supplying "fire" by red electric lights or a red lantern when all is ready. Some of the boys are talking to each other, some are whistling, and some are singing. There should not be too much noise, but a general air of industry and contentment. Coffee, "wienies" and buns are sufficient for the supper.)

CHALMERS—I'm as hungry as a wild Indian, and if supper isn't ready in five minutes I'm going to tomahawk the whole bunch of cooks.

RED—The smell of that coffee and those "wienies" certainly does make a fellow's eyes water.

HENRY—A person would think that you were talking about onions, Red.

RED—EXCUSE ME, mouth water, I meant to say.

FAT—We're ready any time you fellows are.

(All immediately drop their work which is about finished. Each one goes to the table and gets a knife, fork, spoon, tin cup and paper plate. All gather around the fire and are "helped" — then they scatter and sit in groups around the fire. Impromptu conversation, and all "eat".)

(Lights should be dimmed a little.)

SPECKS—Where's Bugs?

FRITZ—That's so, what has become of him? He hasn't been in camp yet.

JERRY—He went back after his new microscope. He's probably somewhere in the woods now sitting on a stump examining a mummified grasshopper and has forgotten all about our camp.

FAT—You wouldn't catch me going without my supper for anything "mummified," either in this country or old Egypt.

JERRY—No, not you.

(Whistle is heard.)

FAT—There he comes now.

(Troup "call" is given outside.)

(Answer inside.)

(Enter Bugs.)

BUGS—You fellows should have been with me. I've found one of the finest "Social Bee Hives" I ever saw.

Just look here! (*Shows it to some of the boys.*)

SPIKE—Just YOU look here, and eat your supper. Fat and his aides want to get the dishes washed some time tonight. (*Taking him by the collar to the table and then to a seat by the fire.*)

GEORGE—I never ate any supper that tasted better than this does. I think Fat deserves three cheers.

BILL—(*With a big sigh.*) I feel about like Billie Wiggs did after his theatre supper.

SPECKS—Now, Boots, tell us a rattling good story.

BOOTS—I'm not a story-teller.

FRITZ—Sure you are. Tell us something about the time you were up in the Adirondacks.

BOOTS—Did I ever tell you how father and I spent one night in open camp?

SEVERAL—No!

BILL—Tell it, Footsey.

(*Red light's.*)

BOOTS—Father and I had been staying with Uncle Tom at Big Moose Lake hunting and fishing. Father had promised me that we should spend one night in an open camp about two and a half miles from our hotel, and then we felt sure that we would be able to see some deer. One day late in the afternoon, we rowed half a mile up the lake, beached our canoe and with our packs on our shoulders started for our two mile walk over the trail to camp. You know how an open camp is made, don't you?

SEVERAL— No.

BOOTS—It's built a good deal like a "lean-to," only it hasn't anything to lean to. The "lean-to" side is open, the roof is very slanting, around the inside are hung the cooking utensils and the floor is covered thickly with balsam boughs, and you never saw such a fine place to sleep.

SPIKE—Let's make one tomorrow.

BOOTS—Built out in front is a large hearth or open fire-place, usually rather high for convenience in cook-

ing.

As soon as father and I reached camp, we made a fire and had our supper. Then we rested and talked until late in the evening we changed our shoes for moccasins and took the trail again down toward Constable Pond where we hoped the deer might be. It was pitch dark, but by flashing our electric pocket-lamps we managed to keep the trail. We knew that the moon would be up later in the evening. We didn't talk and tried to walk as noiselessly as possible. When we were within twenty or thirty rods of the pond, we got down on all fours and crawled along. My heart began to beat so loud, it seemed as if it could be heard a mile. At last we came to the edge of the woods where we lay flat under some bushes. We laid still so long that I was afraid that I could never move my legs again, and once I nearly died I wanted to sneeze so bad, and I guess I was getting a little sleepy when father gave me a poke and whispered, listen! I pricked up my ears and listened until it seemed as if my ear drums would burst and I thought that father had only imagined that he had heard something, when I heard a little crackling noise and then what sounded like something pushing thru the bushes on the other side of the little pond. I looked with all my eyes and in just a minute the moon broke thru the trees and I saw a splendid big buck come out from the timber not two hundred feet away. I nearly yelled and father gave me another poke. The buck seemed to be waiting for something and pretty quick here came the daintiest, handsomest little doe. They looked so beautiful as they stood there together snuffing the air that I wondered how a person could shoot a deer anyway. After a minute they came down to the water and began to drink. I was so excited that I could scarcely breath, and I was just thinking how lucky we were to have such a fine chance to watch them, when that sneeze that I had forgotten all about, went off like a toy canon. I heard father say something under his breath, then I heard a strange pounding or stomping sound and away went the deer. (*All the boys laugh heartily.*) I felt

pretty mean, I tell you, to spoil the whole thing that way. Father said that there wasn't much use to wait for any more as the buck had stomped to warn others, so we hurried back to camp. It didn't take us long to get to bed and I guess it didn't take us long to go to sleep, but I don't believe we had been asleep a great while when I woke up suddenly and as sure as I'm alive something was walking on the roof. I didn't want to wake father, so I kept quiet and listened. Queer what an awful lot of sounds a fellow will hear in the woods at night! I had just begun to think that my imagination must have been at work when I heard a dull thud. It sounded in the direction of the fire-place, so I raised up a little and looked out there. The next instant I yelled loud enough to raise the dead for I saw two great green eyes as big as saucers glaring at me, and the minute I yelled the thing leaped right at me and landed on my feet. I yelled again louder than before and then I laid nearly paralyzed I was so scared. Father switched on his light and asked me what in the world was the matter. My teeth chattered so I could scarcely speak, but I managed to say "th-at-t a p-p-p-an-ther ha-d j-jmp-ed at-t m-m-me." Father made a grab for his gun and then we both listened a minute and heard—the most comfortable, contented purring. Father turned his lamp around and there curled up on my feet was a fine old tabby-cat. It had probably strayed in from one of the farm houses a mile or so away.

(Boys all laugh and exclamations of "That's fire!" "Takes Boots to tell a story" etc., are heard.)

(Then one scout should lead off with a good anecdote, beginning by saying, "that reminds me". This should be followed by four or five more. Good outing, hunting, fishing or trapping stories are the best. After the stories the dialog continues.)

(Lights change to green.)

SPECKS—How bright the stars are to-night. I'd like

to live out-of-doors always, where you can see things. How many constellations do you fellows know?

JERRY—I don't know any. I never could understand how people see chairs and bears and hares and horns and dippers and things in the stars.

GEORGE—The Great Bear and the Big Dipper are the same thing, at least the seven big stars in the Great Bear or the seven stars of the Dipper. How do you expect to keep track of the North Star if you don't know the Dipper, Jerry?

JERRY—I don't expect to keep track of it.

CHALMERS—It's easy. The last two stars on the side away from the tail of the Great Bear point right straight at the North or Pole Star, and the Pole Star is the last star in the tail of the Little Bear.

JERRY—That just shows how much you fellows know about it. Bears don't have tails.

(All the boys laugh.)

JOHN—Of course not, but can't you imagine a little something?

JERRY—I think this star business is all imagination.

CURTIS—I think it is mighty interesting. I like to study out the figures. There's the Twins, The Dog, and the Little Dog, and The Bull, and—

SPIKE—Orion is my favorite. He's such a big old giant. The three stars in his belt are like great jewels.

TEN-PENNY—I like the Pleides, they are so brilliant and twinkle so.

BILL—The North Star is the best. I think it ought to be called "Old Faithful." It is always there, and means more to sailors and woods-people than any other, I think it ought to be the Scout Star.

BOOTS—I guess you are right, Bill. We'll have it for ours any way. We must have a few minutes signal drill and then it will be time to "turn in."

(Semaphore drill with flags or lights. The latter are more effective if all the stage lights can be turned out and the boys use red lights for the drill.)

(Following the drill the boys "turn in" with characteristic goodnights, and TAPS ARE SOUNDED.)

Curtain.

ACT II—SCENE II.

FULL LIGHTS

(Camp is in order— the boys are finishing packing utensils, etc.)

RED—I tell you what, fellows, I wish this was the beginning instead of the end of our week.

JERRY—So do I. I never had such a good time before in my life.

ARTHUR—And we've learned many new things about scouting too. I think it's great.

BUGS—My specimen case is full to the cover. I never found so many interesting "eumenes fraterna," "orgyia leucostigma," "cecropia moth caterpillars," and heaps of other things. Now just look at this—

RED—If we don't have bugs on the brain when we get home it won't be your fault. We've had "skippers" in the coffee, caterpillars in the stew-pans, and bees in our blankets. We won't forget your part of the trip very soon.

BUGS—Well, who got the turtles for soup, the fish for supper, and the squirrels and rabbits for dinner, every once in a while?

ARTHUR—That's right. Bugs has helped Fat out with many a fine dish. I'm for Bugs every time.

GEORGE—And so am I.

SPIKE—And so am I.

BILL—And so am I.

BOOTS—When we get back to the barracks, Bugs is going to have a corner in one of the rooms and have all the specimens that he has collected on this trip mounted and on exhibition.

CHALMERS—That's fine. And each one of us when we get a really good specimen can bring it, and first thing you know we will have a good little museum.

BOOTS—Already, fellows, for our morning drill.

(FIRST AID TO THE INJURED EXHIBITION.

First--Different kinds of bandaging and tying for cuts.

Second--Resuscitation.

The time taken for these exercises may be ad libitum.)

BOOTS—(Stepping to the front and addressing the audience.) The Boy Scouts of..... wish to thank you heartily for your appreciation of our pictures of "REAL SCOUT LIFE," and we hope that you have enjoyed them as much as we have. Boy Scouts are to be found today in practically every country in the world. In honor of Ernest Thompson Seton and Leif. Gen. Sir Robert Baden-Powell, the founders and promoters of the Boy Scout movement, we are going to give as a conclusion to our play, a flag drill in which fifteen nations besides our own will be represented.

The Scout Flag Drill is given.

Curtain.

DRILLS.

THE SCOUT MARCH.

(To be given with hats on.)

1. From center of back forward single file to center of front.
2. R. and L. to opposite corners, down sides meeting partners at center of back.
3. Forward by twos to center of front.
4. R. and L. by twos.
5. To corners, then to middle of sides.
6. By twos from one side straight across to opposite side, couples dividing and passing thru.
7. Mark time until straight lines are complete, then single file to back corners and to center of back.
8. Forward by original couples to front.
9. Mark time, lines face opposite direction, forward march to sides, about face, mark time.
10. Lines forward march to center and back to place.

11. Number by fours, fours wheel, alternating pivots.
12. Lines forward march to center, rear face.
13. Forward march.
14. First four of each line across back, down sides to front corners, second four of each line to back corners, mark time.
15. Forward march from corners to center.
16. Mark time, right face.
17. Whole figure wheel once around.
18. About face, whole figure wheel.
19. Four ends about face.
20. Whole figure wheel. (*The four ends will be marching in opposite direction from the others.*)
21. Mark time, face corners.
22. Forward to corners.
23. Second fours to center of back, mark time.
24. First fours down sides to join line.
25. Forward march by partners down center to front.
26. To the right march, single file.
27. Form circle.
28. Gradually march in until the circle gets as small as possible, then each boy sits on the knees of the boy back of him. (*The circle must be absolutely tight to do this successfully.*) Hats are taken off with the inside hand and held high in toward the center and are "balanced" by the opposite hand held low, palm out. Hold this position eight counts.
29. Stand and gradually widen the circle to original size.
30. March once around single file, then to back of stage.

SCOUT ANVIL CHORUS DUMB-BELL DRILL.

(*To be given with hats off.*)

(MUSIC— "God of the Nations" from "Il Trovatore".)

Slow time. Repeat the first eight measures before the last part is played. Make the first note of the ninth measure a half note to fill out the first measure of the repeat.)

Position—Bells on hips.

1. Counts 3-4, bells down to side.
 Counts 1-2, bells on chest.
 Counts 3-4, bells down to side.
 Counts 1-2, bells behind back.
 Counts 3-4, bells down.
 Counts 1-2, bells on shoulders.
 Counts 3-4, bells down.
 Counts 1-2, bells on hips.
2. Repeat except last two counts. On four bring bells to hips.
3. Counts 1-2, charge to R. oblique.
 Counts 3-4, rear face.
 Counts 1-2, charge R. foot back.
 Counts 3-4, front face.
4. Eight counts, same to L., bells still on hips.
5. Counts 1-2, cross R. foot over L.
 Counts 3-4, rear face, pivot on toes.
6. Repeat to front face. On four, bells down at sides.
7. Counts 1-2, R. face, bells on hips.
 Counts 3-4, R. face, bells down.
 Counts 1-2, R. face, bells on hips.
 Counts 3-4, R. face, bells down.
8. Counts 1-2, charge R. foot and strike bells overhead.
 Counts 3-4, position, strike bells back.
 Counts 1-2, charge L. foot and strike bells overhead.
 Counts 3-4, position, strike bells back.
9. Repeat, eight counts.
10. Counts 1-2, strike front.
 Counts 3-4, strike back.
 Counts 1-2, strike front.
 Counts 3-4, strike back.

11. Counts 1-2, L. arm out front.
Counts 3-4, R. bell on shoulder.
 12. Anvil Strike, sixteen times, (eight measures.)
 13. Rataplan, eight counts.
 14. Counts 1-2, bells to chest.
Counts 3-4, bells straight side.
Counts 1-2, bells front.
Counts 3-4, bells overhead.
Counts 1-2, bells front.
Counts 3-4, bells side.
Counts 1, strike back.
Counts 2-3-4, rest.
 15. (*Very slow.*)
Counts 1-2, strike front below.
Counts 3-4, charge R. foot oblique and strike bells overhead.
Counts 1-2, sink to R. knee.
Counts 3-4, strike overhead. (*Hold position.*)
- Curtain.

SCOUT FLAGS OF ALL NATIONS DRILL.

(*To be given with hats on and blanket packs on shoulders.*)

(*MUSIC— Snatches from national airs should be played as each nation enters, and a medley of national airs makes a good march.*)

- | | |
|--------------|--------------------|
| 1. Scotland. | 9. Holland. |
| 2. Ireland. | 10. Russia. |
| 3. France. | 11. Austria. |
| 4. Spain. | 12. Italy. |
| 5. Germany. | 13. Japan. |
| 6. Denmark. | 14. China. |
| 7. Norway. | 15. England. |
| 8. Sweden. | 16. United States. |

(*With a Betsy Ross Flag.*)

(*Other nations may be added. Silk flags at least a yard wide should be used. They may be used later as decorations for the barracks or may be presented to some school.*)

1. Boys should march in order of size, one at a time from center of back to center of front, flags carried "shoulder arms."

2. Halt center front, bring flag around holding it with both hands so that it is plainly seen by all, then the boy should announce in a clear voice the name of country whose flag he carries.

3. Flag returned to "shoulder arms" and first boy marches R. to corner, second L. to opposite corner, etc., each faces diagonally front and brings flag to "order arms." After each boy has taken his place all should be standing to form a very wide inverted "V."

England should come next to the last and be the partner of the U. S.

4. The boy representing the United States should carry a "Betsy Ross" flag and when he comes to the front the music ceases and he gives a short account of the flag. He then takes his place opposite England in the point of the V.

5. All flags wave, eight counts.

6. All face point of V except England and United States.

7. Forward march to center of front.

8. R. and L. single file around sides to center of back.

9. Forward march in lines about two feet apart to front, mark time.

10. Face opposite directions.

11. Flags are brought to "carry arms," using left hand to steady the flag. Hold four counts, back to "shoulder arms."

12. Flags to "order arms," hold four counts, back to "shoulder arms."

13. Charge L. knee, rest flag in the L. hand about knee-high, sink to R. knee and lay flag on floor. Hold four counts, recover leaving flags on floor.

14. Front face, scout salute.

15. Center face, scout salute.

16. About face.

17. Charge L. knee, sink on R. knee, hold four counts, recover with flags to "shoulder arms."

18. Forward march, R. and L. single file around to center back.

19. Forward by twos.

20. R. and L. by twos to center back.

21. Forward by fours.

22. R. and L. by twos to center of back.

23. Forward by twos.

24. R. by single file and form circle.

25. Once around, even numbers form smaller circle inside the larger.

26. Once around, inside circle reverse and twice around.

27. Inside circle about face, fall into place, forward by partners.

28. From center back forward by twos to front, R. and L. twos to center back.

29. Forward by fours about two-thirds down stage.

30. First four sit on floor, second four kneel close back of these, third four stand close to second, fourth divide, two kneel with second row, two stand with third row. Flags arranged to show well. (Music chorus of "The Star Spangled Banner." Red lights.) Drop an American flag as large as possible down to make the background. Boys remove hats and hold them on left shoulder.

THE BETSY ROSS FLAG.

The history of our national flag is rather a long story. Many emblems were used at different times by the colonists. I wish to tell you of the two most important which lead directly to the adoption of our present well-beloved "Stars and Stripes." The first is the flag which was displayed at Washington's camp in January, 1776, and which had probably been used on the battle-ships the preceding fall. This flag had the English crosses in the king's colors and the thirteen stripes symbolizing the thirteen colonies, and expressed the

general situation at that precise time. The colonies regarded themselves as Englishmen living in America and they were simply fighting for the same freedom that other Englishmen enjoyed. When the complete separation came, and July Fourth, 1776, became the birthday of a new nation, a different national emblem was needed. It was not until June 14, 1777, however, that Congress resolved, "That the flag of the United States be thirteen stripes, alternate red and white; that the union be thirteen stars, white in a blue field, representing a new constellation."

Thus we see that the change from the colonists' flag to that of the United States of America was very natural and direct. There was no longer a union of kingdoms, but a Union of Thirteen States. The thirteen stars representing these states were placed in a circle on a blue field. This is often called the "Betsy Ross" flag, because it is said that Washington engaged Betsy Ross to make the first flag of this design. As the new states entered the Union additional stars and bars were added until in April, 1818, Congress passed

"AN ACT TO ESTABLISH THE FLAG OF THE
UNITED STATES."

Section 1. Be it enacted, etc., That from and after the fourth day of July next, the flag of the United States be thirteen horizontal stripes, alternate red and white; that the Union have twenty stars white in a blue field.

Section 2. And be it further enacted, That on the admission of every new State into the Union, one star be added to the union of the flag; and that such addition shall take effect on the fourth of July next succeeding such admission. Approved, April 4, 1818."

No changes have been made in our flag from that day to this except the adding of stars as the territories have become states. How many stars are there in the blue field of our flag today?



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